

SECRET
NO FOREIGN DISSEM

S-1896

22 April 1966

Subject: Bomb Damage Assessment of the B-52 mission against Mu Gia Pass, 11 April 1966

1. The air strike by B-52's against a segment of Mu Gia Pass between the Laos border and Don Bai Dinh, North Vietnam which took place on 11 April 1966 did not result in the interdiction of route 15 for a significantly greater period of time than interdictions from previous air strikes on the pass. Analysis of post strike photography of 12 April by the Imagery Analysis Division, NPIC, revealed 5 separate road cuts on a 2500 foot section of route 15, and about 189 new bomb craters in the target area. * In addition, there is a possible landslide adjacent to the northernmost road cut. The poor quality of the photography precluded more detailed readout. Preliminary analysis of photography obtained on 14 and 17 April showed route 15 to be servicable north of the target area and some evidence of vehicular traffic.

2. The only effective interdiction occurred at the 5 separate road cuts, which could be repaired in a short period of time. Although an estimated 25,000 cubic yards** of earth were displaced by the total number of bombs (189) in the target area, it probably resulted in no more than 10 percent of this amount of displacement to create the 5 road cuts. Out of 1389 bombs dropped (about 600 tons), [REDACTED] Assuming some delay before the start of repair work because of the [REDACTED] it is estimated that a crew of 250 laborers using hand tools could have the 5 road cuts repaired in 8 to 10 hours. It is common practice for Communist truck traffic to begin driving on strategic routes before they are fully repaired. Earlier photography of route 7 and Mu Gia Pass in Laos has shown trucks winding through the cratered sections of these roads.

* This film was not received in IAD until 21 April 1966

** Assuming an average of 130 cy of earth displaced per bomb between the equal number of 750-pound and 1000-pound bombs dropped.

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